

### Proceedings of the Members of Congress adverse to the Nebraska Bill--Their Address to the People.

WASHINGTON, June 21, 1854.

At a meeting of the members of Congress who opposed the passage of the bill to organize the territories of Nebraska and Kansas, held pursuant to previous notice, in the city of Washington, on the 20th day of June, inst., the Hon. Solomon Foot, of Vermont, was elected Chairman, and the Hon. Daniel Mace, of Indiana, and the Hon. Reuben E. Fenton, of New York, were appointed Secretaries.

A committee appointed for the purpose reported an address to the people of the United States, which, having been discussed and amended, was unanimously adopted, and ordered to be published.

#### To the People of the United States.

The eighth section of the act for the admission of Missouri into the Union, known as the Missouri Compromise law, by which the introduction of slavery into the regions now known as Kansas and Nebraska was forever prohibited, has been repealed. That law which, in 1820, quieted a controversy which menaced the Union, and upon which you have so long reposed, is obliterated from the statute book. We had no reason to expect any such proposition when we assembled here six months ago, nor did you expect it. No State, no citizen of any State, had demanded the repeal.

It seems a duty we owe to the country to state the grounds upon which we have steadfastly, though ineffectually, opposed this alarming and dangerous act.

You need not be told that the slavery question lies at the bottom of it. As it was the slaveholding power that demanded the enactment of the Missouri Compromise, so it is the same power that has now demanded its abrogation.

African slavery was regarded and denounced as a great evil by the American colonies, even before the revolution; and those colonies which are now slaveholding States, were equally earnest in such remonstrances with those which are now free States. Colonial laws, framed to prevent the increase of slavery, were vetoed by the King of Great Britain. This exercise of arbitrary power to enlarge and perpetuate a system universally regarded as equally wrongful in itself and injurious to the colonies, was one of the causes of the revolution.

When the war was ended there was an imperious necessity for the institution of some government in the then unoccupied territories of the United States. In 1784, Jefferson proposed, and in 1787 the Continental Congress adopted the ordinance for the government of the territory lying northwest of the Ohio, by which it was declared that there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude except for the punishment of crime. The great and flourishing States since organized within that territory, on the basis of that ordinance, are enduring monuments of the wisdom of the statesmen of the revolution.

The foreign slave trade was regarded as the source of American slavery, which it was believed would be dried up, when that fountain should be closed. In adopting the Constitution, it was so universally anticipated that the foreign slave trade would be promptly prohibited, that all parties acquiesced in a stipulation postponing that measure till 1808. The foreign slave trade was prohibited—thus the source of slavery was understood to be dried up, while the introduction of slavery into the territories was prohibited. The slavery question, so far as it was a national one, was understood to be finally settled, and at the same time the States had already taken up and were carrying forward a system of gradual emancipation. In 1803, Louisiana was acquired by purchase from France, and included what is known as the States of Louisiana, Missouri, Arkansas and Iowa, and the territories known as Kansas and Nebraska. Slavery existed at the time in New Orleans and at St. Louis, and so this purchase resulted in bringing the slavery question again before Congress. In 1812, the region immediately surrounding New Orleans applied for admission into the

Union, under the name of the State of Louisiana, with a constitution tolerating slavery, and the free States acquiesced. Eight years afterward the region connected with St. Louis demanded admission under the name of the State of Missouri, with a constitution tolerating slavery. The free States reverted to the principle of 1787, and opposed the admission of Missouri, unless she would incorporate into her constitution an inhibition of the further introduction of slavery into the State. The slaveholding States insisted upon her unqualified admission. A controversy arose which was sectional and embittered, and which, we are assured by contemporaneous history seriously imperilled the Union. The statesmen of that day in Congress settled the controversy by compromise. By the terms of this compromise the free States assented to the admission of Missouri with her slaveholding constitution, while the slaveholding States on their part yielded the exclusion of slavery in all the residue of the territory which lay north of 36 deg. 30 min., constituting the present territory of Kansas and Nebraska. The slaveholding States accepted the compromise as a triumph, and the free States have ever since left it undisturbed and unquestioned. Arkansas, a part of the territory of Louisiana, which lay south of 36 deg. 30 min., in compliance with an implication which was contained in this compromise, was afterwards admitted as a slaveholding State, and the free States acquiesced.

In 1819, Florida, a slaveholding province of Spain, was acquired. This province was afterwards admitted as a slaveholding State. The free States again acquiesced. In 1845, Texas, an independent slaveholding state, was annexed, with a provision in the article of annexation for the sub-division of her territory into five States. The free States, although they regarded the annexation, with the probable increase of the number of slave States, with very great disfavor, nevertheless acquiesced again. New territories were acquired by the treaty of peace which closed the war with Mexico. The people of California formed a constitution prohibiting slavery, and applied for admission into the Union. Violent opposition was made by the slave States in and out of Congress, threatening the dissolution of the Union if California should be admitted. Proceeding on the ground of these alarms, Congress adopted another compromise, the terms of which were, that ten millions of dollars of the people's money should be given to Texas to induce her to relinquish a very doubtful claim upon an inconsiderable part of New Mexico, that New Mexico and Utah should be organized without an inhibition of slavery, and that they should be afterwards admitted as slave or free States as the people, when forming constitutions, should determine; that the public slave trade in the District of Columbia should be abolished without effecting the existence of slavery in the district; and that new and rigorous provisions for the re-capture of fugitive slaves, of disputed constitutionality, should be adopted, and that on these conditions California should be admitted as a free State. Repugnant as this compromise was to the people of the free States, acquiescence was nevertheless practically obtained by means of solemn assurances, made on behalf of the slaveholding States, that the compromise was and should be forever regarded as a final adjustment of the slavery question, and of all the issues which could possibly arise out of it. A new Congress convened in December 1851. Representatives from the slave States demanded a renewed pledge of fidelity to this adjustment. It was granted by the House of Representatives on the following terms:

*Resolved*, "That we recognize the binding efficacy of the compromises of the constitution, and believed it to be the intention of the people generally, as we hereby declare it to be ours individually, to abide by such compromises and sustain the laws necessary to carry them out, the provisions for the delivery of fugitive slaves, and the act of the last Congress for that purpose included; and that we deprecate all further agitation of questions embraced in the acts of the last Congress, known as the compromise, and of questions generally connected with the in-

stitution of slavery, as unnecessary, useless and dangerous."

A few months subsequently, the Democratic National Convention met at Baltimore, and assuming to speak the sentiments of the Democratic party, set forth in its platform: That the Democratic party will resist all attempt at renewing, in Congress or out of it, the agitation of the slavery question under whatever shape or color the attempt may be made. Soon afterward another national convention assembled in the same city, and assuming the right to declare the sentiments of the Whig party, said:—"We deprecate all further agitation of the questions thus settled as dangerous to our peace, and will discountenance all efforts to continue or renew such agitation, whenever or however made." The present administration was elected on the principle of adherence to this compromise, and the President, referring to it in his inaugural speech, declared that the harmony which had been secured by it should not be disturbed during his term of office. The President, recurring to the same subject, renewed his pledge in his message to Congress at the beginning of the present session, in the following language:

"But notwithstanding differences of opinion and sentiments which then existed in relation to details and specific provisions, the acquiescence of distinguished citizens whose devotion to the Union can never be doubted, has given renewed vigor to our institutions, and restored a sense of repose and security to the public mind throughout the confederacy. That this repose shall suffer no shock during my official term, if I have the power to avert it, those who placed me here may be assured."

Under these circumstances, the proposition to repeal the Missouri Compromise was suddenly and unexpectedly made, by the same committee on Territories, which only ten days before had affirmed the sanctity of the Missouri Compromise, and declared the end of agitation in the following explicit and unmistakable language.

"Your committee do not feel themselves called upon to enter into a discussion of those controverted questions. They involve the same grave issues which produced the agitation, the sectional strife and the fearful struggle of 1850. As Congress deemed it wise and prudent to refrain from deciding the matters in controversy then, either by affirming or repealing the Mexican laws, or by an act declaratory of the true intent of the constitution, and the extent of the protection afforded by it to slave property in the territories, so your committee are not prepared now to recommend a departure from the course pursued upon that memorable occasion, either by affirming or repealing the eighth section of the Missouri act, or by any act declaratory of the meaning of the constitution in respect to the legal points in dispute."

The abrogation has been effected in pursuance of the demand of the administration itself, and by means of its influence in Congress. In the House of Representatives, that body which is more immediately responsible to the people, the contest was more equal than in the Senate; though it is due to justice and candor that it should be stated, that it could not have been carried in either house without the votes of the representatives from the free States. The minority resisted the attempts to arrest discussion upon this grave question, through a struggle of longer duration than any other known to Congressional history. Some attempt was made to stigmatize that minority as "factionists," yet we fearlessly declare that throughout the contest they resorted solely to the powers secured to them by the law and the rules of the House, and the passage of the measure through the House was effected through a supervision of its rules by the majority, and the exercise of a power unprecedented in the annals of Congressional legislation. The deed is done. It is done with a clear proclamation by the administration and by Congress, that the principle which it contains extends not only to Kansas and Nebraska, but to all the other territories now belonging to the United States, and to all which may hereafter be acquired. It has been done unnecessarily and wantonly, because there was no pressure for the

organization of governments in Kansas and Nebraska, neither of which territories contains one lawful inhabitant who was a citizen of the United States, and because there was not only no danger of disunion apprehended, but by this reckless measure the free States have lost all the guarantee for freedom in the territories contained in former compromises, while all the States, both slave and free, have lost the guarantees of harmony and union which these compromises afforded. It seems plain to us that, fatal as the measure it in these respects, it is only a cover for broader propagandism of slavery in the future. The object of the administration, and of many who represent the slave States, is, as we believe, to prepare the way for annexing Cuba at whatever cost, and a like annexation of half a dozen of the States of Mexico, to be admitted also as slave States. The acquisitions are to be made peaceably, if they can be purchased at the cost of hundreds of millions. If they cannot be made peacefully, then at the cost of a war with Mexico, and a war with Spain, and a war with France, and at the cost of an alliance with Russia scarcely less repugnant. Unmistakeable indications also appear of a purpose to annex the eastern part of St. Domingo, and to subjugate the whole island, restoring it to the dominion of slavery—and this is to be followed up by an alliance with Brazil, and the extension of slavery in the valley of the Amazon. It is for you to judge whether, when slavery shall have made these additions to the United States, it will demand unconditional submission on the part of the free States, and failing in that demand, attempt a withdrawal of the slave States and the organization of a separate empire in the central region of the continent. From an act so unjust and wrongful in itself and fraught with consequences so fearful, we appeal to the people. We appeal in no sectional spirit. We appeal equally to the North and to the South, to the free States and to the slaveholding States themselves. It is no time for exaggeration or for passion, and we therefore speak calmly of the past, and warn you in sober seriousness of the future. It would not become us, nor is it necessary, to suggest the measures which ought to be adopted in this great emergency. For ourselves we are ready to do all that shall be in our power to restore the Missouri Compromise, and to execute such further measures as you in your wisdom shall command, and as may be necessary for the recovery of the ground lost to freedom, and to prevent the further aggressions of slavery.

SOLOMON FOOT, Chairman.

DANIEL MACE,  
REUBEN E. FENTON, } Secretaries.

The meeting was fully attended and all the anti-Nebraska members concurred in the address.

CINCINNATI June 26.—A mob occurred at Ripley on Saturday night, caused by the inmates of a coffee house throwing rotten eggs into a temperance meeting. The temperance men rifled the coffee house, and then visited all the liquor shops in town, and those that did not agree to give up business were assaulted. No lives lost.

Last evening a box was sent to the Marine Hospital, corner of Longworth and Western Row, and deposited in the room of the steward, J. H. Allison. About 10 o'clock the steward and his wife being alone in the room, opened the box, when it exploded, mangle the bodies of both horribly. Mrs. Allison had both arms torn off, and her skull fractured. Mr. Allison was dreadfully mangled. The furniture, windows and ceiling of the room was shattered to atoms. Indications are, that the box contained a bomb shell about six inches in diameter. No clue as yet to the perpetrators of this hellish deed.

A Mammoth Crystal, of unusual brilliancy, is on exhibition at New Orleans, which was found on a plantation in Montgomery county, Arkansas, and about twenty feet below the surface. It is twenty-two inches long, seventeen high, and about sixteen in breadth, and weighs one hundred and seven pounds, has a very ragged and uneven, but picturesque surface. The Delta says some portions of its projections vie in brightness with diamonds of the purest water.